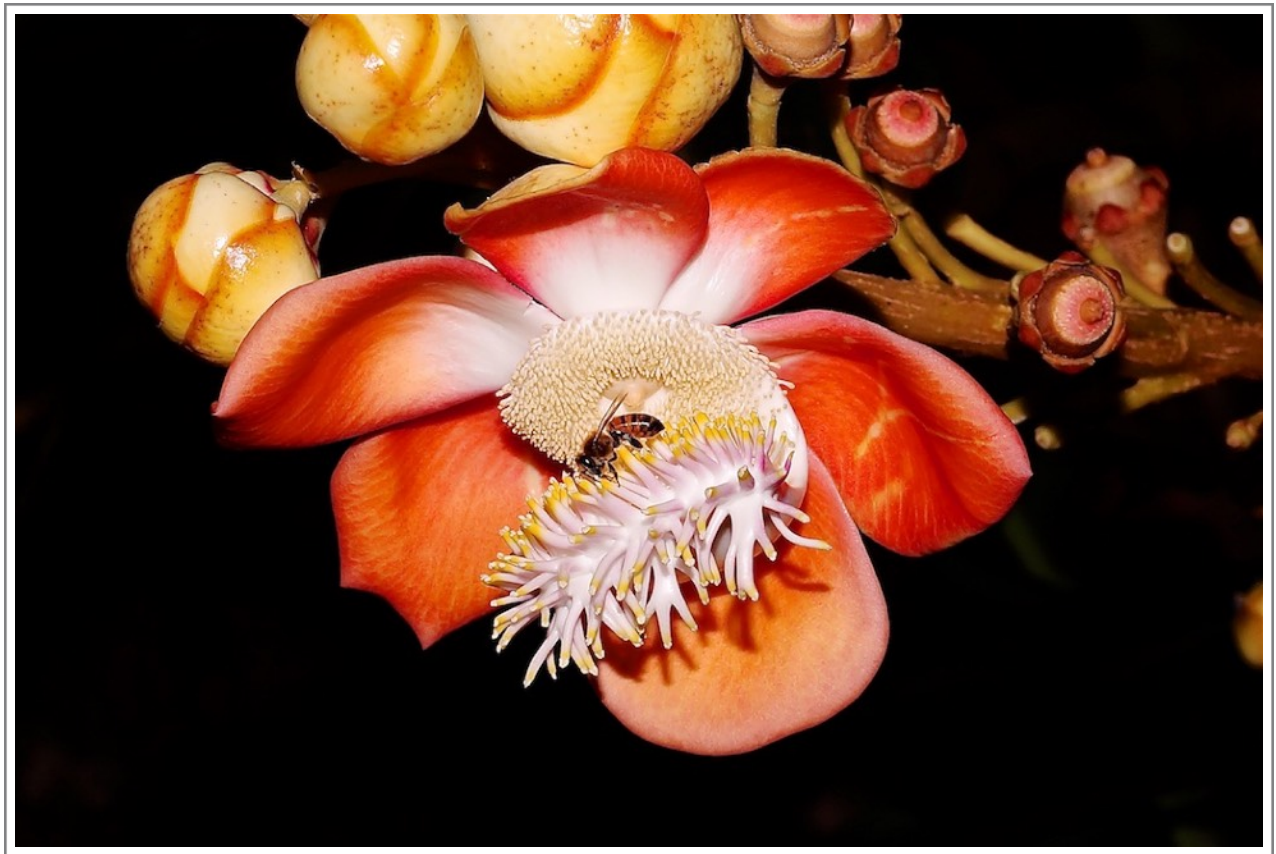


Notes on the etymology of Aublet's generic names

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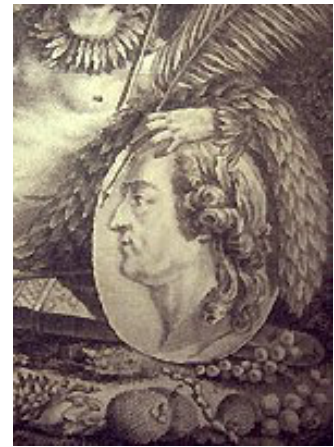
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On the cover: *Couroupita guianensis*- *couroupitoutoumou* for *quelques nations sauvages de la Guiane*, *boulet de canon* for the *Créoles & les Negres*. Photograph by the author.

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During the preparation of *Etimología de los géneros de plantas en Puerto Rico* (Mari Mut, 2016) Aublet's generic names caught my attention due to their relationship with the language of Amerindians and the fact that the etymology of so many remains unknown. There's a general impression that all these names were based on the native names for the plants (e.g., Théis, 1810; Wittstein, 1856; Quattrocchi, 2000), but the discovery that *Remirea* was probably named after a locality (Mari Mut, 2017a) and Delprete's (2015) suggestion of etymologies for three Rubiacean genera (*Coussarea*, *Nacibea* and *Tocoyena*) suggested that a another look at these names could lead to the discovery of additional etymologies.

Jean Baptiste Christophore (or Christian) Fusée Aublet was born in Salon de Provence, France, in early November 1720. He studied pharmacy and botany at Montpellier under François Boissier de Sauvage de Lacroix and botany at the Jardin du Roy under Bernard de Jussieu. From 1752 to 1762 Aublet worked in Mauritius (Ile de France), where he collected plants and participated in the foundation of the island's main botanical garden. After a short stay in Paris, he accepted the position of “King's botanist and apothecary” in Cayenne, French Guiana.



From July 1762 to July 1764, he explored coastal areas, canoed and hiked into the forest, collected thousands of plants and met native tribes. After a year in Haiti, where he also collected plants, Aublet reached Paris in 1765. With help from Jussieu, he spent the next nine years studying his collections and preparing his only botanical publication: *Histoire des plantes de la Guiane Francoise*, published in 1775 in London. Three years later Aublet died in Paris, aged 58. The above profile, fittingly held by a native, is from the frontispiece of his book. More biographical information and an itinerary of Aublet's travels is given by Delprete (2015).

Histoire des plantes consists of four tomes or volumes, the first two contain an autobiographical introduction, the plant descriptions (in Latin and French), and ten essays or memories on various topics; the other two contain the plant illustrations. By my count, Aublet proposed 207 new generic names. He adopted the sexual

system of classification, but openly disregarded Linnaeus' suggestion to modify or substitute "barbarous names" for names of Greek or Latin origin... the large majority of Aublet's names, generic and specific, are the native names for the plants or slight alterations.

Aublet commented frequently on the uses given to plants by the natives and has thus been considered a founding father of ethnobotany in the Neotropics (Plotkin et al., 1991, cited in <http://sweetgum.nybg.org/science/projects/lp/biblio-details/?irn=169065>). He was also a pioneer abolitionist and expressed his views against slavery in *Observations Sur les Nègres Esclaves* (seventh memory of volume 2); for his life-long stand against slavery, Aublet has been called the first secular abolitionist (Cook, 1940; Dover, 1956).

The first two volumes of *Histoire des plantes* were examined looking for information relevant to the etymology of each generic name. Searches were then conducted in the web, in printed and digital literature in my library, and in maps found online. The excellent map reproduced by Delprete (2015), published in 1729 and thus very likely available to Aublet, and another map found on the web are reproduced at the end of this work. The generic names are arranged below in three groups: names for which Aublet provided the etymology, names for which others authors have proposed an etymology or one can be reasonably deducted, and names whose etymology remains unknown.

Group 1. Aublet provided the etymology for the following 111 generic names. Although he never explicitly gave the meaning of any name, these are clearly derived from names for the plant, its fruit, wood or another characteristic; one is named after a locality and one after a person. Seventy-four names originate with the Galibis or mainland Caribs, today frequently called Kali'na because it is how they call themselves. The Galibis lived (and still live) not far inland and were thus frequently encountered by Aublet. Twenty-one names came from the Garipons, a tribe which came to French Guiana from a Portuguese colony near the mouth of the Amazon, in the state of Pará. Two names were provided by the Nouragues and one by the Coussaris, tribes that lived inland from Cayenne. Three

names are of Creole origin. Aublet's text is in Latin and French, in the former Carib is used as a general term, the tribe's name appears in the latter.

Aberemoa Annonaceae- from *aberemou*, Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Ablania Elaeocarpaceae- from *goulougou-ablani*, Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Abuta Menispermaceae- from *aboutoua* or *abutua*, Garipon name for *A. amara*.

Acioa Chrysobalanaceae- from *acioua*, Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Aiouea Lauraceae- from *aiouvé*. Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Amaioua Rubiaceae- Garipon name for *A. guianensis*.

Amanoa Phyllanthaceae- from *amanuou*, Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Ambelania Apocynaceae- from *ambelani*, one of two Galibi names for *A. acida*, the other being *paraveris*.

Apalatoa Fabaceae- from *apalatoua*, Galibi name for *A. spicata*.

Arouna Fabaceae- Galibi name for *A. guianensis*.

Bagassa Moraceae- Galibi name for *B. guianensis*.

Bocoa Fabaceae- from *bois boco*, name given to the tree by the inhabitants of Caux.

Caraipa Calophyllaceae- from *caraipé*, Garipon name for *C. angustifolia*.

Carapa Meliaceae- Galibi name for *C. guianensis*. The Garipons called it *y-andiroba*, being andiroba the common name for the tree and its wood.

Carapichea Rubiaceae- from *carapiche*, Garipon name for *C. guianensis*.

Catinga Myrtaceae- from *iva-catinga*, Garipon name for *C. moschata*.

Conami Phyllanthaceae- from *conami para*, one of the Creole names for *C. brasiliensis* in Brazil (near Pará), the other being *amazone*. This plant is from Brazil, so the specimens must have been given to Aublet or were present in France.

Conceveiba Euphorbiaceae- from *conceveibo*, Galibi name for *C. guianensis*.

Conohoria Violaceae- from *conohorié*, Galibi name for *C. flavescens*.

Coublandia Fabaceae- for a locality named Descoublandiere, which belonged to Claude Gabriel d'Escoubland de la Rougerie, French military officer and landowner near whose property the plant was found. See <http://laguyane.free.fr/villes/Les%20origines%20des%20villes.htm>. Lotte Burkardt kindly provided Descoubland's complete name.

Couepia Chrysobalanaceae- from *couepi*, Galibi name for *C. guianensis*.

Couma Apocynaceae- Galibi name for *C. guianensis*.

Coumarouna Fabaceae- from *coumarou*, Galibi and Garipon name for *C. odorata*.

Coupoui Rubiaceae- from *coupoui-rana*, Garipon name for *C. aquatica*.

Couratari Lecythidaceae- name given to the tree by *les Negres*, who also call it *balata blanc* and sometimes *maou*. *Couratari* is probably of native origin.

Courimari Elaeocarpaceae- Nourague name for *C. guianensis*.

Couroupita Lecythidaceae- from *couroupitoutoumou*, name given to the tree by *quelques nations sauvages de la Guiane*.

Coussapoa Urticaceae- from *coussapoui*, Galibi name for *C. latifolia*.

Coutoubea Gentianaceae- Galibi name for *C. spicata* and *C. ramosa*.

Deguelia Fabaceae- from *assa-ha pagara undeguélé*, Galibi name for *D. scandens*.

Enourea Sapindaceae- from *eymara enourou*, Galibi name for *E. capreolata*.

Eperua Fabaceae- from *eperu*, Galibi name for the fruit of *E. falcata*; the name for the tree is *vovapa-tabaca*. *Eperu* means *saber* (a type of sword), possibly referring to the shape of the pod and reflecting contact with europeans.

Evea Rubiaceae- from *evé*, Galibi name for *E. guianensis*.

Ferolia Moraceae- Pierre Eléonore de La Ville Marquis de Férolles (x-1705), French military officer, General governor in the French regions of Guyana

(1679-1700) and Cayenne (1701-1705), introduced the wood of the tree to the market. The name was primarily derived from the wood (bois de férole).

Goupia Goupiaceae- from *goupi*, Galibi name for *G. glabra*.

Hevea Euphorbiaceae- from *hévé*, name given to the tree by the inhabitants of Esmeraldas province northwest of Quito. The Mainas of Ecuador call it *caoutchouc* and the Garipons call it *siringa*.

Heymassoli Ximeniaceae- Galibi name for *H. spinosa*.

Houmiri Humiriaceae- Garipon name for *H. balsamifera*. The accepted spelling for this name is *Humiria*.

Icacorea Primulaceae- from *icacore-catinga*, Garipon name for *I. guianensis*.

Ivira Malvaceae- Garipon name for *I. pruriens*.

Licaria Lauraceae- from *licari kanali*, Galibi name for *L. guianensis*.

Mabea Euphorbiaceae- from *piriri mabé*, Galibi name for *M. piriri*.

Macahanea Celastraceae- from *macaca-hana*, Garipon name for *M. guianensis*.

Macoucoua Aquifoliaceae- from *macoucou*, Galibi name for *M. guianensis*.

Manabea Lamiaceae- from *manabo*, Galibi name for *M. laevis*.

Managa Celastraceae- Galibi name for *M. guianensis*.

Mapouria Rubiaceae- from *maypouri-crabi*, Galibi name for *M. guianensis*.

Maripa Convolvulaceae- Galibi name for *M. scandens*. The same name was also used for a species of palm.

Matayba Sapindaceae- from *matabaiba*, Galibi name for a variety of *M. guianensis*; names for the other variety are *touaou* and *atouaou*.

Minquartia Olacaceae- from *minquar*, Creole name for *M. guianensis*.

Montira Loganiaceae- for M. de Monti, counsellor at the Superior Council of Cayenne, who helped the author during his investigations. The plant used to describe the genus was found in his cotton field. See also Théis (1810: 310).

Moronobea Clusiaceae- from *moronobo*, one of the Galibi names for *M. coccinea*, the other being *coronobo*.

Mourera Podostemaceae- from *mourerou*, Galibi name for *M. fluviatilis*.

Mouriri Melastomataceae- from *mouririchira*, Galibi name for *M. guianensis*.

Mouroucoa Convolvulaceae- from *mouroucou-yarana*, Garipon name for *M. violacea*.

Moutabea Polygalaceae- from *aimoutabou* (also spelled *aymoutabou*), Galibi name for *M. guianensis*.

Moutouchi Fabaceae- from *moutouchi*; Galibi, Garipon and Creole name for *M. suberosa*.

Napimoga Salicaceae- from *napimogal*, Galibi name for *N. guianensis*.

Nonatelia Rubiaceae- from *nonoateli*, Galibi name for *N. officinalis*.

Ouratea Ochnaceae- from *oura-ara*, Galibi name for *O. guianensis*.

Ourouparia Rubiaceae- from *y-ourou-pari* (also spelled *yourou-pari*), Garipon name for *O. guianensis*.

Outea Fabaceae- from *ioutay*, Garipon name for *O. guianensis*.

Pacouria Apocynaceae- from *pacouri-rana*, Garipon name for *P. guianensis*.

Paloue Fabaceae- Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Paralea Ebenaceae- from *parala*, Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Parinari Chrysobalanaceae- Garipon name for *P. montana*.

Patima Rubiaceae- from *patima-rana*, Carib name for *P. guianensis*. The native tribe was not specified.

Paypayrola Violaceae- Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Pekea Caryocaraceae- Galibi and Nourague name for *P. butirosa*.

Pirigara Lecythidaceae- from *pirigamepé*, Galibi name for *P. tetrapetala* and *P. hexapetala*, the first species is also called *caripa*.

Pitumba Salicaceae- from *pitumba-rana*, Garipon name for *P. guianensis*.

Poraqueiba Metteniusaceae- Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Posoqueria Rubiaceae- from *aymara-posoqueri*, Galibi name for *P. longiflora*.

Pourouma Urticaceae- Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Pouteria Sapotaceae- from *pouroma-pouteri*, Galibi name for *P. guianensis*.

Qualea Vochysiaceae- from *qualé*, Galibi name for *Q. caerulea*.

Quapoya Clusiaceae- from *quapoy*, Galibi name for *Q. scandens*.

Quebitea Piperaceae- from *daquejoabite*, name for this plant whose juice is used against snake bites. The native tribe was not specified.

Quiina Ochnaceae- from *guiina-rana* or *quiina-rana*, Garipon name for *Q. guianensis*

Ropourea Ebenaceae- from *aroupourou*, Coussari name for *R. guianensis*.

Rouhamon Loganiaceae- from *rouhahamon*, Galibi name for *R. guianensis*.

Sabicea Rubiaceae- from *sabisabi*, Galibi name for *S. aspera*.

Sagonea Hydroleaceae- from *sagoun-sagou*, Galibi name for *S. palustris*.

Saouari Caryocaraceae- name given to *S. glabra* by the people of the country and the inhabitants of Cayenne.

Simarouba Simaroubaceae- Galibi name for *S. amara*.

Simira Rubiaceae- Galibi name for *S. tinctoria*.

Singana Fabaceae- from *singan singa*, Nourague name for *S. guianensis*.

Tachia Gentianaceae- from *tachi*, Galibi name for ant nests, because hollow stems and branches of the plant are occupied by ants.

Tachibota Chrysobalanaceae- from *umbetachibote*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Tachigali Fabaceae- Galibi name for *T. paniculata*.

Tanibouca Combretaceae- Garipon name for *T. guianensis*, called *tonibouca* by the Galibis.

Tapirira Anacardiaceae- from *tapiriri*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Tapogomea Rubiaceae- from *tapogomo*, Galibi name for *T. tomentosa*.

Taralea Fabaceae- from *tarala*, Galibi name for *T. oppositifolia*.

Tariri Simaroubaceae- Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Thoa Gnetaceae- Galibi name for *T. urens*.

Tococa Melastomataceae- from *tococo*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Tontelea Celastraceae- from *ravoua-tontelle*, Galibi name for *T. scandens*.

Touchiroa Fabaceae- from *moutouchiraou*, Galibi name for *T. aromatica*.

Toulicia Sapindaceae- from *toulici*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Tounatea Fabaceae- from *tounou*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Touroulia Ochnaceae- Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Tovomita Clusiaceae- from *votomite*, Galibi name for *T. guianensis*.

Virola Myristicaceae- one of the Galibi names for *V. sebifera*, the other being *dayapa*.

Vochy Vochysiaceae- Galibi name for *V. guianensis*. Validly spelled *Vochysia*.

Votomita Melastomataceae- from *votomit*, Galibi name for *V. guianensis*.

Vouacapoua Fabaceae- Galibi name for *V. americana*, also spelled *voicapou*.

Vouapa Fabaceae- Galibi name for *V. bifolia*. It is also the Galibi name for *Parivoo grandiflora* and *P. tomentosa*.

Vouarana Sapindaceae- Carib name for *V. guianensis*. The native tribe was not specified.

Voyara Capparaceae- from *vouyara-ovayara-iouva-ayssou*, Garipon name for *V. montana*.

Voyria Gentianaceae- Garipon name for *V. rosea*.

Group 2. Below are 25 names for which etymologies have been suggested and 7 names for which one is suggested herein.

Aniba Lauraceae- Quattrocchi (1: 144) indicates from the Tupi-Guarani *anhuyba* for a species of sassafras. See also http://www.botanicus.org/primeocr/mbgserve14/botanicus3/b12002070/31753002771258/31753002771258_0216.txt

Apeiba Malvaceae- Quattrocchi (1: 69) indicates from a native name in Guiana, *apé* “bark”. Aublet (1: 539) describes the tree’s bark and mentions that it is suited to make rope.

Baillieria Asteraceae- Burkhardt (2018: B-5) suggests for Denis Ballière de Laisement (1729-1800), French pharmacist, writer and music theorist, translated in 1779 John Ellis’s book on Mangostan into French.

Bertiera Rubiaceae- probably for Madame Bertier or the Bertier family, which helped the author during his stay in French Guiana; Madame Bertier is mentioned on volume 1 (p. 447, 560) as owner of an estate or plantation (*habitation*) near which plants were collected, M. Bertier is mentioned on Vol. 2 (Suppl.): 32. Source: Tableau du règne végétal 2: 573. 1799 (spelled *Berthiera*). See also Delprete (2015: 599).

Calinea Dilleniaceae- possibly dedicated to the Kali’na (Galina in French), name used by the Caribs to refer to themselves. Suggested herein.

Cassipourea Rhizophoraceae- possibly after the Cassipour river in Brazil, near the border with French Guiana, or for a tribe of that name living in Brazil and French Guiana. Suggested herein.

Crenea Lythraceae- Quattrocchi (1: 637) indicates from Greek *krene* (well, spring, fountain, source) because the genus loves salt water.

Coussarea Rubiaceae- probably for the Kusari (Coussari) tribe of French Guiana and Brazil, or perhaps after a small forest deer of that name. Source: Delprete (2015: 602).

Galipea Rutaceae- possibly for the Garipon, a tribe that arrived in French Guiana from Brazil. Source: Wittstein (1856: 379). Although Aublet uses Garipons elsewhere, under this name he uses Galipons.

Icica Burseraceae- Wittstein (p. 471) states that the word denotes "resin" and indicates the resin richness of the plant. Aublet gives *arouaou* as the Carib name for the plant, adding that the negroes call it *encens* (incense, possibly referring to the burning of resin as incense).

Licania Chrysobalanaceae- Théis (p. 267) suggests that this is an anagram of the Carib name *caligni* (Aublet 1: 119, 120).

Mahurea Calophyllaceae- possibly after the Mahoury river, territory or mountains, located west of Cayenne and which Aublet likely explored (see Fig. 2). Suggested herein.

Matourea Plantaginaceae- possibly after an area called Matoury, today a commune located south of Cayenne, an area which Aublet likely explored. Suggested herein.

Mayaca Mayacaceae- probably for the Galibi chief Maiac, Capitaine Maiac (Vol. 2 (Suppl.): 105) who helped Aublet understand Galibi society. On page 106 he is called Le Capitaine Mayac. Suggested herein.

Nacibea Rubiaceae- probably for the locality of Nancibo, a village near Nancibo Creek, and not far from the town of Roura... or to Saut Nacibo, of the Sinnamary River, now inundated by the Petit-Saur Dam. Source: Delprete (2015: 608).

Norantea Marcgraviaceae- possibly an anagram of *conoro-antegri*, the Carib name for the tree. Source: Théis (1810: 325).

Ocotea Lauraceae- Quattrocchi (3: 1853) suggests that it is a latinization *ajou-hou-ha*, the Garipon name for *O. guianensis* (Vol. 2: 781, 783).

Palicourea Rubiaceae- probably for the Palikur (Palicour) tribe of French Guiana and Brazil. Source: Quattrocchi 3: 1937. See also Delprete (2015: 611). The map provided by Delprete shows a wide area in Brazil labelled Palicour and below *ammis des Francois*. The Palikur still live in Brazil and French Guiana.

Pariana Poaceae- according to Clifford and Bostock (2007: 220) *-ana* indicates a connection and the name honors the Paris, an Amerindian tribe living in Amazonia. A tribe called Paria lives in Venezuela.

Perebea Moraceae- possibly an anagram of *vévé éperou*, one of the Galibi names for the tree, the other being *abérérou*. Suggested herein.

Potalia Gentianaceae- from Greek *poton* (drink, drinking water), because the leaves and green stems are used to prepare a very bitter and regurgitative herbal tea. Source: Quattrocchi (3: 2155). The drink is mentioned by Aublet (1: 396) without reference to the generic name.

Rapanea Primulaceae- Quattrocchi (4: 2269) indicates that it derives from *rapana*, a common name used in tropical America.

Raputia Rutaceae- Théis (p. 395) indicates after the Orapu forest in Guiana, where the bush was found.

Remirea Cyperaceae- probably for the parish (*paroisse*) of Remire, then a small village near the seashore close to Cayenne (see Fig. 2). Source: Mari Mutt (2017a: 90). The only species of the genus, *R. maritima*, is cosmopolitan on sandy beaches.

Rinorea Violaceae- Quattrocchi (4: 2320) indicates as a possibility from the Greek *rhinos* (nose) and *oros* (hill), or referring to the anthers.

Rourea Connaraceae- possibly for the parish or town of Roura (Aroua), located on the Oyak River, where the plant was found. Source: Mari Mut (2017b: 97).

Simaba Simaroubaceae- Quattrocchi (4: 2484) states that it is the native name in Guiana for *S. multiflora* A. Juss. 1825, but the species is represented only by figures in Jussieu's plate 27 and Aublet provided no indication of the name source.

Talisia Sapindaceae- Quattrocchi (4: 2627) indicates that it is a native name in Guiana, although Aublet gives *toulichy* as the Carib name; he also suggests from the Greek *thaleo* (to grow green, flourish).

Tocoyena Rubiaceae- probably for the Tokoyene (Tocoyen, Tocoienne) tribe of French Guiana. Source: Delprete (2015: 621). In the map provided by Delprete, the Tocoienne are also in Brazil.

Trigonia Trigoniaceae- from Greek *tri* (three) and *gonia* (angle), referring to the three-angled fruit (capsule). Source: Th  is (1810: 465).

Vantanea Humiriaceae- Th  is (p. 478) indicates from *iouantan*, the Nourague name for the plant (1: 572, 573).

Xiphidium Haemodoraceae- probably from Greek *xiphos* (sword) and *-ideum* (similar) or *-idium* (small), referring to the shape of the leaves. Source: Th  is (1810: 489). See also Wittstein (1856: 941).

Group. 3. No etymology has been proposed for the following 64 names, other than saying they are the Guianan names for the plants or the names used by Aublet for the plants. Detailed maps of Cayenne and other areas explored by Aublet could yield insight on the etymology of some of these names, as could perhaps do someone familiar with the language of the Kali'na- for a dictionary see Courtz (2008).

Acouroa Fabaceae, **Aruba** Simaroubaceae, **Bacopa** Plantaginaceae, **Banara** Salicaceae, **Bassovia** Solanaceae, **Cabomba** Cabombaceae, **Cacoucia** Combretaceae, **Ciponima** Symplocaceae, **Cipura** Iridaceae, **Conobea** Plantaginaceae, **Coutarea** Rubiaceae, **Faramea** Rubiaceae, **Guapira** Nyctaginaceae, **Iroucana** Salicaceae, **Macoubea** Apocynaceae, **Malanea** Rubiaceae, **Mapania** Cyperaceae, **Maprounea** Euphorbiaceae, **Maquira** Moraceae, **Matelea** Apocynaceae, **Mayepea** Oleaceae, **Mayna** Achariaceae, **Meborea** Phyllanthaceae, **Moquilea** Chrysobalanaceae, **Orelia** Apocynaceae,

Pachira Malvaceae, ***Pacourina*** Asteraceae, ***Pagamea*** Rubiaceae, ***Pamea*** Combretaceae, ***Parivoa*** Fabaceae, ***Passoura*** Violaceae, ***Patabea*** Rubiaceae, ***Perama*** Rubiaceae, ***Piparea*** Salicaceae, ***Piratinera*** Moraceae, ***Piripea*** Orobanchaceae, ***Piriqueta*** Passifloraceae, ***Possira*** Fabaceae, ***Quararibea*** Malvaceae, ***Racaria*** Sapindaceae, ***Racoubea*** Salicaceae, ***Rapatea*** Rapateaceae, ***Riana*** Violaceae, ***Ronabea*** Rubiaceae, ***Roupala*** Proteaceae, ***Senapea*** Passifloraceae, ***Sipanea*** Rubiaceae, ***Siparuna*** Siparunaceae, ***Soramia*** Dilleniaceae, ***Souroubea*** Marcgraviaceae, ***Taligalea*** Lamiaceae, ***Tamonea*** Verbenaceae, ***Tampoa*** Celastraceae, ***Taonabo*** Pentaphylacaceae, ***Tapura*** Dichapetalaceae, ***Tibouchina*** Melastomataceae, ***Ticorea*** Rutaceae, ***Tigarea*** Dilleniaceae, ***Tonina*** Eriocaulaceae, ***Tontanea*** Rubiaceae, ***Topobea*** Melastomataceae, ***Vatairea*** Fabaceae, ***Vouay*** Arecaceae, ***Waria*** Annonaceae.

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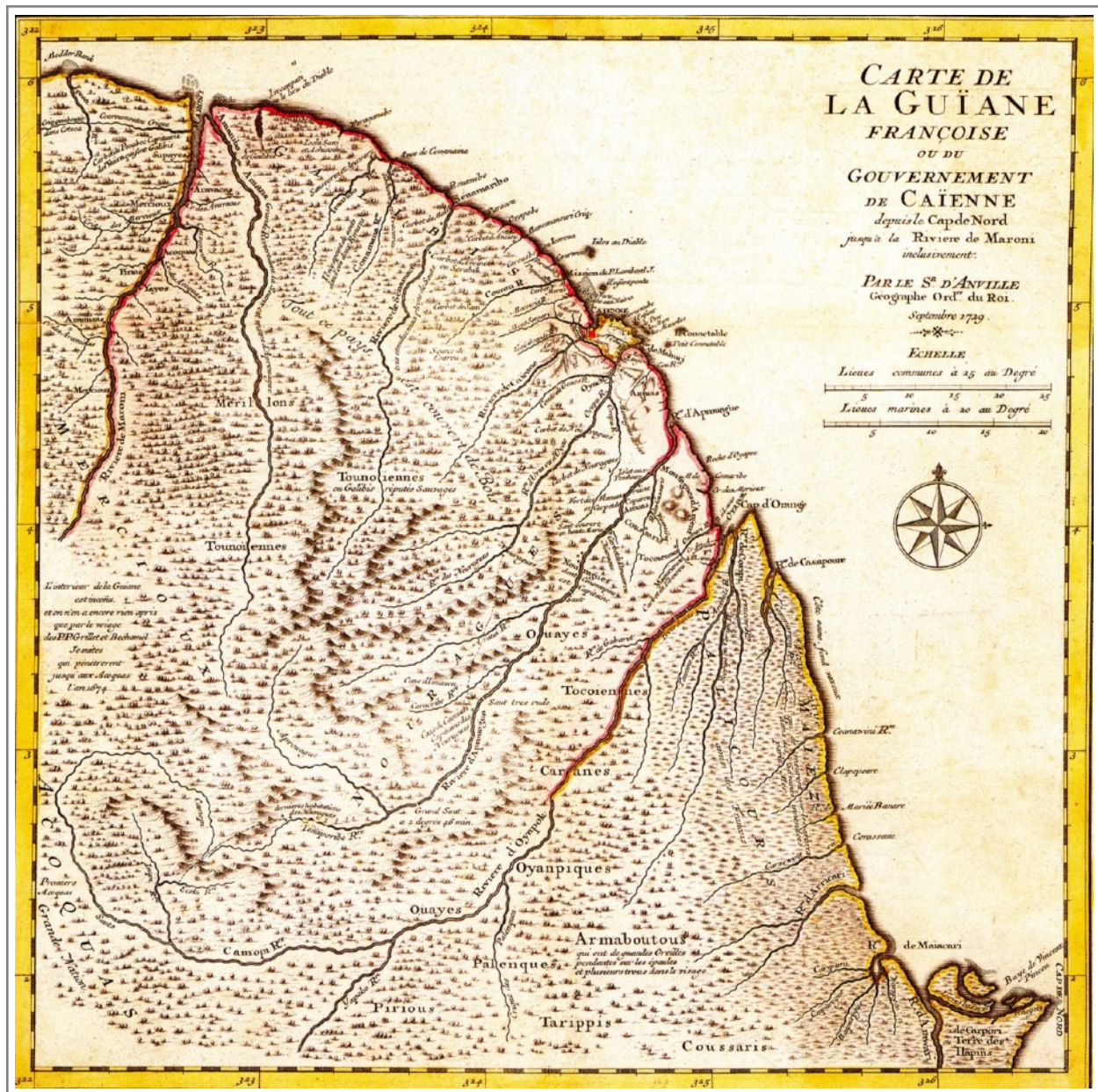


Fig. 1. Map of French Guiana, from Delprete (2015). For more detail, enlarge the pdf file or see the map in the pdf of Delprete's article (link in the References).

